

Att'y Docket: 1728.04

In response, claim 1 was cancelled and claim 2 and 3 were amended to insert a blank between the elements and the reference numerals therefor. Also 'at one side' at lines 2 and 12 of the original claim 2 was amended to 'at the face of a wall' to clarify the invention.

II. Claims 2 and 3 were rejected as being unpatentable over JP09-238589 to Toshio (Toshio hereinafter) in view of US Patent No. 5,865,144 to Semunuk (Semunuk hereinafter).

Toshio discloses a lid having a plurality of exhaust holes, an outer filter provided over the exhaust holes and fixed between an outer filter fixing frame and an inner filter fixing frame, and an inside wire gauze lid that is provided in a space below the lid and inside of the body, and supplies feed and water to test animals.

Semunuk discloses a cage having an air supply valve.

An invention understood by combining the disclosure of Toshio and Semunuk is as follows:

A cage comprising a lid having a plurality of exhaust holes, an outer filter provided over the exhaust holes and fixed between an outer filter fixing frame and an inner filter fixing frame, a body provided under the lid, an air supply valve provide on one side of the body, and an inside wire gauze lid that is provided in a space between the lid and the body, and supplies feed and water to test animals.

The inventions described in the amended claims 2 and 3 are compared with the invention understood from the cited references.

The examiner stated that Toshio's inside wire gauze lid corresponds to the inner filter of the present invention.

However, the drawings of the present invention show an inside wire gauze lid is separately provided inside the body. That is, the present invention differs from the cited reference that the present invention comprises the outer filter, the inner filter and the inside wire gauze lid, while the cited reference discloses the outer filter and the inside wire gauze lid only.

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The examiner stated that Toshio discloses an exhaust space formed between the lid, on which the outer filter is provided, and the inside wire gauze lid, and compared this exhaust space of Toshio with the exhaust space of the present invention.

However, the exhaust space is provided between the outer filter and the inner filter, and thus is different from the cited reference.

Also, in the present invention, two filters are installed in the lid, while only one filter is installed in the lid in the cited reference.

Moreover, the present invention is different from the cited reference in that the exhaust space is formed by spacing apart the two filters, and the exhaust outlet is formed on the face of a wall corresponding to the exhaust space of the lid.

As explained above, the construction of the present invention having the exhaust space, the exhaust outlet and the inner filter is different from that of the cited references.

Further difference is that the cage of the present invention may be used both for positive pressure and negative pressure since it has dual filters. On the other hand, the cage of the cited reference, which has only one filter may not be used for clinical experiments which require a negative pressure that is lower than the ambient pressure, and a cage for negative pressure and a cage for positive pressure must be provided separately.

In detail, in the present invention, in case of positive pressure, as shown in Fig. 6, the air that flows into the box through the air supply valve is used for respiration of the test animals and contaminated. The contaminated air is purified by the inner filter and is exhausted into the exhaust space. Then part of the flowed-in air is exhausted via the exhaust outlet to the exhaust pipe, and simultaneously the air corresponding to the difference between the inner air pressure and the ambient air pressure is purified with the outer filter and exhausted out of the cage through the exhaust holes.

In case of negative pressure, as shown in Fig. 7, the air that flows into the box through the air supply valve is used for respiration of the test animals and contaminated. The contaminated air is purified by the inner filter and is exhausted into the exhaust space. Then the flowed-in air is exhausted via the exhaust outlet to the exhaust pipe, and simultaneously the outside air is sucked through the outer filter in response to the difference between the inner air pressure and the

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ambient air pressure and then exhausted also to the exhaust pipe via the exhaust space thereby keeping the negative pressure inside the cage constant.

In summary the present invention may be used both for positive and negative pressures with one cage, and the feature is not disclosed in the cited references.

CONCLUSION

The applicant believes that the objections and rejections were obviated by the amendment of claims, and the application is now in condition for allowance: therefore, reexamination, reconsideration and allowance of the claims are respectively requested. If there are any additional comments or requirements from the examination, the applicant asks for a non-final office action.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any additional fees associated with this communication, or credit any over-payment to Deposit Account No. 16-0310.

Very truly yours,

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